



Monthly Immunization Update October 2017

Dear Providers,

This newsletter is meant to keep you up to date on issues related to vaccines quickly and easily. We welcome your comments and questions; please email us at immunization.program@ventura.org

Hepatitis A Outbreaks in California Counties: Hepatitis A virus (HAV) outbreaks have occurred in San Diego and Santa Cruz counties. On September 17, 2017, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health declared an outbreak of HAV in Los Angeles County.

The large majority of cases have occurred in persons who are homeless and/or use illicit drugs (injection and non-injection), with several cases also occurring among people who provide services to the homeless.

To date there have been no cases linked to this outbreak in Ventura County. Given the potential for spread, Ventura County Public Health (VCPH) has been closely monitoring the situation since July, and preparing for the possibility of an outbreak in our county. Our priorities are to do all we can to prevent the outbreak by keeping the community informed of the situation and provide vaccination to at-risk populations.

Physicians are required to report HAV cases to the Communicable Disease Office at Ventura County Public Health. HAV causes acute liver disease, which may be severe. Signs and symptoms of acute HAV include fever, malaise, dark urine, lack of appetite, nausea, and stomach pain, followed by jaundice (or yellow eyes). Symptoms generally last for less than 2 months although some persons may have prolonged or more severe illness. Infection can be prevented in close contacts of patients by vaccination or administration of immune globulin within 2-weeks following exposure. If you experience these symptoms, contact your physician.

Although hepatitis A is very contagious, the public is encouraged to take the following steps to prevent hepatitis A:

- Get vaccinated for hepatitis A
- Don't have sex with someone who has hepatitis A infection
- Use your own towels, toothbrushes and eating utensils
- Don't share food, drinks, or smokes with other people
- Wash hands with soap and water after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before preparing, serving or eating food.

VCPH continues surveillance for cases and is working closely with healthcare providers and organizations that serve high-risk HAV population to protect the health of clients, staff and the community. High risk groups and those that work with this population are encouraged to get Hepatitis A vaccination from their health care provider.

For more information on hepatitis A, visit:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Hepatitis-A.aspx>.
[Information from Ventura County Health Officer.](#)

San Diego County Hepatitis A death toll rises to 18; public health emergency status extended through October 24: San Diego County News Center: [Hep A Emergency Declaration Extended Again](#)

Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine each year. Vaccines are especially important for people who are at high risk for complications from flu, and for people who live with or care for someone who is at high risk.

For a successful Influenza vaccination season discuss and outline key strategies to achieve high influenza vaccination coverage rates of your patients and decrease missed opportunities for vaccination.

These strategies may include:

- Reminding patients to come in for their annual influenza vaccination
- Expanding hours for influenza vaccination
- Allowing influenza vaccine-only visits
- Discussing mechanisms to track patients who will be due to return to the practice for a second dose.

For a community clinic near you visit our website @ <http://vchca.org/immunization-program>

Protect Your Patients with Asthma from Influenza

People with asthma are more likely to get severe influenza. Asthma is the *most* common medical condition among children hospitalized with influenza and one of the more common conditions among hospitalized adults.

CDC reports on vaccination coverage of kindergarten students during 2016–17 in MMWR

CDC published [Vaccination Coverage for Selected Vaccines, Exemption Rates, and Provisional Enrollment Among Children in Kindergarten—United States, 2016–17 School Year](#) in the October 13 issue of *MMWR* (pages 1073–80). A summary made available to the press is reprinted below.

For the 2016–17 school year, vaccination coverage among kindergartners remained high and exemptions remained low. Based on the data:

- *Median vaccination coverage was 94.0 percent for two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine; 94.5 percent for the state-required number of doses of diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis vaccine; and 93.8 percent for two doses of varicella vaccine*
- *Median exemption level was 2.0 percent*
- *Median proportion of kindergartners under a grace period or provisional enrollment was 2.0 percent, the same as in 2015–16*

School assessment allows immunization programs to focus on schools with lower vaccination coverage and higher exemption levels, and encourages follow up with under vaccinated students to ensure kindergartners are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Vaccine tips

Inspect every vaccine shipment as soon as it arrives.

- Inspect the package for damage
- Verify that the vaccines were shipped at the proper temperature
- Verify you received what you ordered
- Check the packing slip
- Count the doses
- Store the vaccines and diluent properly

If there are shipping issues or discrepancies, immediately do the following:

1. Document them on a [Vaccine Receiving Log and Checklist \(IMM-1112\)](#)

2. Fax the completed form and the packing slip to the VFC Call Center and
3. Call for further instructions

If you have any questions please call the VFC Program at (877) 243-8832.

Keep in mind that all VFC communications are always posted on VFC's website, www.eziz.org

You can also view this information on <http://www.vchca.org/for-health-care-providers-cmr-tb-forms> or

follow us on:  

Ventura County Public Health Immunization Program

Phone: (805) 981-5211 Fax: (805) 981-5210 immunization.program@ventura.org